Proposal to amend the Indian Forest Act

2629. SHRI DEBABRATA BISWAS: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to amend the Indian Forest Act;

(b) whether Government have the objective of increasing green cover; and

(c) whether this legislation enables Government to declare deforested land as suitable for emergency afforestation programmes?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABULAL MARANDI): (a) Yes, Sir. Government has undertaken a detailed exercise to amend the Indian Forest Act, 1927 to provide for restoration, conservation and management of forests and also to consolidate the various State amendments for providing a uniform law thereby.

(b) and (c) Government have the objective of increasing green cover, in the National Forest Policy, 1988, by massive afforestation programmes with the involvement of people. The legislation under amendment aims to strengthen the provisions of forest protection to safeguard against qualitative and quantitative decline of forests.

Decay of Nature due to use of Plastic Material

2630. SHRI K.M. SAIFULLAH: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that considering the World-wise condemnation against plastic as the material being non-biodegradable and non eco-friendly, widespread use of plastic in our country even in non essential place is further decaying the nature;

(b) whether the Ministry have evolved any specific strategy to face the grave situation; and

(c) if not, the Ministry's attitude in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) to (c) Based on the available information, the use of plastsic material including polythene bags is not banned in other countries. However, a proposal to prohibit the use of the recycled plastic carry bags for packing or carrying foodstuffs and other related materials is under consideration of the Government.

Demand of Rice and Sugar in Andhra Pradesh

2631. DR. MOHAN BABU: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the annual estimated demand of rice and sugar of Andhra Pradesh during the last two years;

(b) the actual allocation made from Central Government to Andhra Pradesh during the said period;

(c) whether State Government has demanded increase in the allocation during 1998-99; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS: (SHRI SATYA PAL SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b):

Rice

The annual demand of Andhra Pradesh for rice and the actual allocation made from the Central Pool to the State during the last two years are as under:—

(In Lakh Tonnes)

	Demand	Allocation
1996-97	25.20	24.90
1997-98	4.20	4.20
(April-May, 97)		

From June, 97 Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) has been introduced throughout the country including Andhra Pradesh. Under TPDS,

the monthly allotments of rice and wheat for various States/UTs are made on the basis of average lifting in the past taking into account the requirement for the population below the poverty line @ 10 kilogram per family per month. The allocation of rice made to Andhra Pradesh from June, 97 to March, 98 is 18.89 lakh tonnes.

Sugar

Under the present policy of partial control the allocation of levy sugar to most of the States/UTs is being made on a uniform norm of ensuring 425 gms. per capita per month availability as per 1991 census effective from 1.1. 1996 and not on the basis of demand. On the basis of the above criteria, the monthly levey sugar quota of Andhra Pradesh works out to 28267 MTs. In addition to monthly allotment, the Government also releases levy sugar for festivals to States/UTs annually in the month(s) or their choice and in proportion to their monthly levey sugar quota. The annual festival quota levey sugar to Adnhra Pradesh is 7614 tonnes.

An *ad-hoc* increase of 10% over and above the monthly levey sugar quota was allowed to all States/UTs including Andhra Pradesh for the months of December, 96, January, 97 and February, 97. Also, the annual festival quota of all States/UTs including Andhra Pradesh was doubled for the calendar year 1996.

(c) No demand for increase in the total allocation of either rice or sugar during 1998-99 has received from the Government of Andhra Pradesh.

(d) Does not arise.

Soaring Vegetable Prices in Delhi

2632. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that vegetable prices are soaring in Delhi;

(b) whether Government are aware of the news-item published in the Hindustan Times on 24th June, 1998 under caption "spiralling rates push vegetables out of agenda"; and

(c) if so, what steps have been taken to control the prices of vegetables in Delhi?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS: (SHRI SATYA PAL SINGH YADAV): (a) The vegetable and fruit prices in recent weeks have shown an upward trend in Delhi. The main reasons for this sudden increase are reported to be the lean supply season for fresh vegetables, high temperature during entire April-May, 1998 in almost entire surrounding region affecting vegetable crops and damage to fruit crops during winter.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. The prices of important vegetables like potatoes and onions are being monitored regularly. In order to minimise the hardships of the consumers, arrangements are being made to supply potatoes at a reasonsble rate through Super Bazar in Delhi. In view of the on set of monsoon, the availability of fresh green vegetables is expected to normalise in the coming weeks.

खाद्यान्नों की प्रति व्यक्ति उपलब्धता

2633. **श्री नागमणि:** क्या खाद्य और उपभोक्ता मामले मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) पिछले तीन वर्षों के दौरान तथा अप्रैल, 1998 तक भारत में खाद्यानों की प्रति व्यक्ति दिन-वार/माह-वार उपलब्धि कितनी-कितनी रही;

(ख) क्या यह सच है कि देश में प्रति व्यक्ति खाद्यान्न की उपलब्धता में गिरावट आयी है; और

(ग) यदि हां, तो इसके क्या कारण हैं तथा सरकार खाद्यान्न की प्रति व्यक्ति उपलब्धता में आयी गिरावट को पूरा करने के लिए क्या प्रभावी कदम उठाने का विचार कर रही है?